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Economic Commission for Africa

Public Administration Human Resources
and Social Development Division

REPORT OF THE SEVENTH MEETING OF THE MINISTERIAL FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE OF TEN OF THE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR HUMAN RESOURCES PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND UTILIZATION

(Africa Hall, Addis Ababa, 18-19 April 1992)

I ORGANIZATION

1. The Seventh meeting of the Ministerial Follow-up Committee of Ten of the Conference of Ministers Responsible for Human Resources Planning, Development and Utilization was held at Africa Hall, Addis Ababa on 18 and 19 April, 1992.

II ATTENDANCE

2. The meeting was attended by the following members of the Committee:

- Sudan - Chairman (Interim)
- Kenya - First Vice-Chairman
- Senegal - Second Vice-Chairman
- Ethiopia - Third Vice-Chairman
- Swaziland - Rapporteur
- Algeria
- Malawi
- Nigeria
- Rwanda

3. Also participating in the meeting were observers from Guinea and Morocco. Observers from the following international, regional and sub-regional organizations also attended the meeting: International Labour Organization (ILO/JASPA), Organization of African Unity (OAU), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

III ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

4. The Committee adopted the following agenda:

- Opening
- Election of the Bureau
- Adoption of the Agenda and Organization of Work
- Consideration of the Report on the Status, Policies and Programmes of Human Resources Planning, Development and Utilization in Africa: Focus on Resource Mobilisation and Utilization in Higher Education and Generation of Productive Employment
- Any Other Business
- Consideration and Adoption of the Report of the Meeting

IV OPENING OF THE MEETING

5. In his introductory remarks to the Seventh Meeting of the Ministerial Follow-up Committee of Ten of the Conference of Ministers Responsible for Human Resources, Planning Development and Utilization, the interim Chairman, H.E. Dr. Hussein S. Abu Salih of the Republic of Sudan started by saying that the concerns of the African countries to achieve socio-economic development could only be met by increased and sustained production and growth. He said that Africa was striving to achieve self-reliance so as to eradicate poverty and make the process of socio-economic development self-sustaining. He identified a number of issues which had to be resolved. These included falling real wages and the purchasing power of the population; the rising rates of unemployment; and diminishing resources to basic and higher education.

6. With regard to higher education, to which the Committee was to address itself, he reiterated the fact that Africa experienced a critical shortage of scientific and technical manpower which was needed for socio-economic development. He argued that, given the fact that higher education was very expensive, institutions of higher learning ought to come up with innovative measures of generating resources so as to supplement those provided by national governments.

7. The Chairman noted that Africa needed to create more productive employment opportunities by promoting the productive sectors of the economy, such as agriculture, through increased credit provision to small-scale farmers, increased literacy programmes, establishment of rural based agro-industries, etc.; and through the promotion of self-employment in the formal and urban informal sectors.

8. Skills and entrepreneurial development programmes had to be designed and implemented so as to promote productive employment through self-employment and the development of robust small-scale industries and enterprises.

9. He concluded his remarks by hoping that the Committee would come up with policy recommendations that could help Africa to attain accelerated socio-economic development, which was also just and equitable.

10. In his address to the Committee, Mr. Issa B. Y. Diallo, the UN Assistant Secretary-General and Acting Executive Secretary of ECA, first welcomed the delegates to the meeting. He further reminded them that it was only in November 1991 that the Committee of Ten had considered, at length and in

depth, the status of human resources planning, development and utilization in Africa. Because of that, the Committee's deliberations were to focus on two important issues: resource mobilisation and utilization in higher education; and the generation of productive employment. He informed the delegates that in order to facilitate their deliberations, the secretariat had placed before them a report which analyzed these issues and made policy recommendations thereon.

11. He drew the Committee's attention to the fact that Africa's institutions of higher learning depended for their income almost entirely on national governments. However, due to the economic crisis facing African countries, institutions of higher learning had been experiencing budgetary constraints which severely compromised their basic functions of propagating knowledge and research.

12. He pointed out that in order for Africa's institutions of higher learning to meet the challenges of development, they had to be reinvigorated with the infusion of adequate and predictable resources. He added that the continuing crisis in Africa made it almost impossible for national governments to increase their contributions to these institutions in the 1990s. Institutions of higher learning in Africa had, therefore, to start exploring alternative non-governmental sources of financial and other resources.

13. The Acting Executive Secretary went on to state that in addition to generating resources from non-governmental sources, institutions of higher learning also needed to develop efficient systems of allocating and managing the limited resources at their disposal. He urged the Committee to consider the report's proposed policy recommendations in this regard.

14. Turning to the issue of productive employment generation in African countries, the Acting Executive Secretary stressed that only a strong integrated economic structure could form a base for productive employment generation on a sustainable basis. He added that employment generation required the strengthening of the productive capacities of the agricultural, industrial and service sectors and the creation of productive backward and forward linkages in the domestic economy. Such productive linkages could be created through increased access to factor inputs, such as land and credit; increased investment in the agricultural sector; the promotion of small-scale industries; and assistance to the informal sector to graduate into more productive enterprises and micro-industries. Other measures which were likely to improve productive employment generation, he argued, included product mixes which were labour intensive and which relied on domestic inputs and high quality

labour market information to make comprehensive employment planning possible.

15. Given the rapid growth in the labour force and the rising rates of unemployment, particularly among the educated, due to the economic crisis and the adoption of structural adjustment programmes, the Acting Executive Secretary stressed the need for promoting productive self-employment through entrepreneurial development, the provision of credit and facilities; and the change in tax regulations to favour the development of micro-enterprises.

16. He concluded his address by urging the Committee to consider these issues and recommendations in depth during its deliberations on the report and to come up with recommendations that could help African governments formulate appropriate policies and measures for dealing with the various problems related to human resources planning, development and utilization. He then wished the Committee success in its deliberations.

V. ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS

Report to the Ministerial Follow-up Committee of Ten of the Conference of Ministers Responsible for Human Resources Planning, Development and Utilization on the Status, Policies and Programmes of Human Resources Planning, Development and Utilization in Africa: Focus on Resource Mobilisation and Utilization in Higher Education and Generation of Productive Employment

17. In presenting the document: **"Report to the Ministerial Follow-up Committee of Ten of the Conference of Ministers Responsible for Human Resources Planning, Development and Utilization on the Status, Policies and Programmes of Human Resources Planning, Development and Utilization in Africa"** E/ECA/PHSD/MFC/92/Wp.1, the representative of the ECA secretariat started by saying that the report focused on two burning issues, namely resource mobilization and utilization in higher education and generation of productive employment under conditions of slower economic growth.

18. With regard to the first issue, he observed that Africa's institutions of higher learning depended on national governments for much of their funding, often up to the tune of 90 to 100 per cent. However, such government subventions had, in real and foreign exchange terms, been on the decline because of budgetary constraints. As a result, institutions of higher learning were experiencing serious problems of inadequate financial and material

resources, which adversely affected their main functions of teaching, research and support of development. Furthermore, due to poor conditions of service and the deteriorated socio-economic situation, experienced and competent teaching and research staff had emigrated abroad in search of better opportunities. In short, the quality of education and the impact and relevance of higher education in Africa were increasingly being called into question as a result of lack of resources.

19. The ECA's representative went on to emphasize that institutions of higher learning had a catalytic role to play in the process of accelerated and sustained growth, development and socio-economic transformation of the region. In order for African universities to meet this challenge, they needed to be reinvigorated with the infusion of adequate and predictable resources to enable them to rebuild their capabilities to discharge their vital duties. At the same time, it was imperative for Africa's institutions of higher learning to explore, more vigorously, alternative non-governmental sources of generating funds and income that were badly needed to exercise their basic functions effectively. Institutions of higher learning also needed to allocate, utilize and manage their existing scarce resources in a cost effective manner.

20. The report, he said, had discussed some of the initiatives and experiences in finding alternative measures of funding and income-generation. Income from such alternative non-governmental sources, though important, was found to be quite insignificant in many universities in Africa.

21. ECA's representative also observed that, in view of the continuing economic crisis, it was highly unlikely that government subventions to African universities could increase significantly in the 1990s. While governments ought to provide the institutions of higher learning with adequate and predictable resources to enable them to undertake their main responsibilities effectively, Africa's higher learning institutions did need to intensify their efforts to mobilize non-governmental funds.

22. It was in this regard that ECA's representative brought to the attention of the Committee three distinct sets of policy recommendations discussed in the report. The first of these were general recommendations dealing with the need for African institutions of higher learning to establish formal structures for the mobilization of resources; put in place incentive measures to help retain experienced staff members; and increase self-reliance by reducing dependence on expensive expatriate personnel and increase the utilization of domestically produced teaching aids and equipment so as to reduce the demand for foreign exchange.

23. The second set of recommendations related to innovative measures for mobilizing non-government funds and other resources, for example, by establishing and strengthening university-productive sector linkages through consultancy services rendered at full financial cost; launching of endowment schemes; mobilizing support from foreign donor organizations, particularly in those areas requiring foreign exchange; levying user charges; and setting-up viable commercial ventures to augment the universities' revenue-earning capacity.

24. The third set of recommendations related to the effective allocation, management and utilization of resources through, for example, establishing collaborative teaching and research programmes; rationalizing and reviewing programmes in the light of labour market requirements; maximizing the use of available facilities as a way of realizing cost-effectiveness; appropriate budgeting; and costing of university services to reflect actual costs; etc.

25. With regard to productive employment, the ECA representative observed that the ability of African countries to generate greater employment opportunities to absorb the growing labour force had been curtailed by slower economic growth and the adoption, in some African countries, of structural adjustment programmes. The ECA representative argued that employment generation policies had to include those aimed at increasing the productive potential of the population and those aimed at restoring real wages to acceptable levels so as to improve the standards of living and income distribution. It was, therefore, imperative for African governments to put in place policy measures aimed at rectifying the economic structure to make it more productive and less dependent on external factors. The creation of strong backward and forward linkages between the key sectors of the economy was needed for achieving self-sustained economic growth and development. Ultimately, the attainment of accelerated self-sustained economic growth was the main requirement for generating more productive employment opportunities.

26. The ECA representative then drew attention to a number of policy measures aimed at strengthening the productive capacity of the African economies and, consequently increasing opportunities for the generation of productive employment, which were detailed in the report. These included: increased access to factor inputs, increased investment in the agricultural and industrial sectors, creating and strengthening rural financial institutions, promotion of self-employment, improved employment planning through manpower analysis and supporting the sizable informal sector to graduate into more productive micro- and small-scale enterprises.

27. The ECA representative concluded his presentation by inviting the meeting to consider the proposed actions in the two areas of focus and emphasized that unless policies and programmes were implemented along the suggested directions, the prospects of finding solutions to the employment problem and augmenting the resources of the universities would be minimal.

28. The Chairman then opened the floor for discussion. The secretariat was commended for the quality of the document, its analysis and recommendations and the manner in which it was presented. It was noted that the recommendations of the document were suitable for implementation by all African countries. The Committee was informed that some member states had been implementing innovative policy measures aimed at increasing access to higher education by augmenting alternative non-governmental sources of finance. In one African country, the government had abolished free full board and accommodation and the cost of these services had been passed on to the students. In addition, the country had established more regional universities so as to reduce transport and living costs incurred by the students.

29. The Committee cautioned that unless precautions were taken, access by the poor to higher education could be compromised by the introduction of user fees. It was suggested that special funds, based on voluntary and/or government contributions, needed to be established so as to provide bursaries to the low-income students. The Committee felt that the issues of equity and efficiency had to be addressed in the financing of higher education. Those students who came from well-to-do families, who were able to pay for their education, need not be subsidized by the state nor by extra-mural students who had to pay for their part-time education.

30. One member felt that there was a limit to which user fees could be levied. For a start, while user fees could, in the short-run, reduce the burden on national governments, it could cause serious political problems in the long-run as the state had the primary responsibility to educate its population. Furthermore, in the context of the reduced purchasing power of workers/employers and the contraction in formal sector employment, enrollment in extra-mural programmes was likely to decrease.

31. While the Committee was cognizant of the fact that higher education enrollment was lowest in Africa compared to elsewhere in the world, it observed that the mobilization of resources for higher education was not the only relevant issue. Rather, the effective utilization of existing resources as well as the adoption of an integrated approach to human resources development and utilization were necessary. The issue of financing higher education and its relevance had to be tackled in the context of the prevailing socio-economic

situation. It was noted that while the region experienced serious shortages in skilled and technical manpower, the incidence of graduate unemployment (even among scientific, engineering and agricultural graduates) was rising in many countries. This implied that there was poor educational planning, that the quality of such graduates was poor or that the training programmes were not reflective of national socio-economic needs. The need for comprehensive studies and analysis of the graduate labour market, at the country level, was therefore imperative.

32. The representative of UNESCO/BREDA informed the Committee that his office had established a consultative committee on higher education to which the ECA was to be invited to join. His office was also preparing a policy document containing UNESCO's views on higher education in Africa. He offered to share the draft with the ECA secretariat.

33. On productive employment generation, the Committee was informed that some member states had implemented measures aimed at achieving self-reliance in food production. Such measures included the establishment of agricultural banks to provide credit to farmers; and the establishment of special funds to provide credit to subsistence farmers. In the urban areas, industrial banks were created so as to finance small-scale industries.

34. In some African countries it had been recognized that specialized educational training could hinder the employment opportunities of graduates. In addition, the lack of a genuine indigenous dynamic private sector made industrial training difficult as much of the industrial activities were restricted to the packaging of imported components. To overcome such problems, one particular country opted for multi-disciplinary training which improved the employment prospects of graduates. Due to the compression of the labour market necessitated by the economic recession, the government put in place self-employment schemes for graduates. The government encouraged graduates to come together to form enterprises for which the government provided factor inputs, land or premises and loans. In the three years in which the programme had existed, over 30,000 jobs had been created in this manner. It was recognised, however, that such measures were piecemeal as the real solution to the problem lay in economic restructuring and the attainment of self-sustained economic growth and development.

35. The role of the informal sector in productive employment generation and how to graduate it into more productive forms of production was discussed. It was noted that some countries had put in place policy measures aimed at increasing the supply of factor inputs to the sector; integrate the

sector in the national development planning process; and other measures designed to improve the productivity of the sector.

Recommendations

36. In light of the above discussion, the Committee observed that the recommendations put forward by the secretariat were commendable and could be implemented by all African countries. In addition, it underscored the following:

A Resource Mobilization and Utilization in Higher Education

1. Higher education institutions are critical to Africa's economic development and transformation. In order for them to meet the development challenges, they have to be revitalized. The increasing bias against these institutions, on the grounds that they are expensive and that the social returns to higher education are lower in comparison to primary and basic education and the preoccupation with the pursuit of the basic and primary education objective exclusive of similar priority to secondary and tertiary levels of education, must be reversed.

2. Basic education and higher education should be expanded in a balanced manner, as they were both vital to national development.

3. Governments should provide adequate and predictable resources to higher education institutions so that these institutions may fulfil their vital role in Africa's socio-economic development effectively.

4. At the same time, institutions of higher learning have to make concerted efforts to mobilize supplementary non-governmental resources along the lines proposed in the secretariat's document.

5. The principle of the "ability to pay", by those who could, should be tapped fully whenever possible.

6. Access by the poor to higher education has to be promoted and assured through the introduction of appropriate arrangements.

B Productive Employment Generation

1. Efforts should be concentrated on the implementation of regionally agreed human resources development strategies and declarations (such as the Khartoum Declaration, the OAU's Declaration of the 27th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government on the Employment Crisis in Africa, and the recommendations of the ECA's Conference of Ministers Responsible for Human Resources Planning, Development and Utilization). Appropriate mechanisms should be established, at the national level, for the implementation of these strategies.

2. The ECA, OAU and ILO/JASPA are urged to collaborate in monitoring, on a regular basis, the implementation of the Declaration of the OAU's summit on the Employment Crisis in Africa and to report to the Committee thereon at its annual meetings.

3. As the unemployment and underemployment problems are directly related to the economic crisis that continues to dog the African region and are also directly related to the economic growth and development policies, it was imperative that policies aimed at adopting an integrated approach to human resources planning, development and utilization as well as the integration of the latter as part and parcel of the national development and planning processes have to be pursued. Employment creation could no longer be treated as a residual issue. It has to feature as a major objective of development plans and policies. It is, therefore, imperative, that, inter-alia, national councils or co-ordinating committees for socio-economic development and planning should be established to perform such co-ordinating functions.

4. Labour market analysis to determine the employment and self-employment prospects of graduates should be undertaken at the national level. The proposal that ILO/JASPA and ECA should collaborate to conduct such country studies is welcomed.

5. Stable political systems and peace are two crucial prerequisites of socio-economic development that need to be ensured on an urgent basis.

Country Statements on National Efforts and Activities in Human Resources Planning, Development and Utilization in Africa

Senegal

37. In his statement, the representative of Senegal first addressed the settlements sector in which numerous actions had been initiated with a view to improving the living conditions of the people by adopting a strategy based on the social and urban settlements. In this regard, water supply had been improved through a major programme of action.

38. He went on to say that in addition to improving standards of living of the population, the government had adopted various subsectoral policies, for example on health, education and employment. Particular attention was paid to the needs and interests of vulnerable groups, such as women and young people. With regard to the health sector, policies were based mainly on the following:

(a) greater decentralization to strengthen the district sanitary system and improve support at the national and regional levels;

(b) better management of human and material resources; and

(c) strengthening the system of medical care by granting hospitals and clinics financial autonomy and the status of corporate bodies.

39. As for education, reforms focused mainly on:

(a) restructuring higher education in order to increase its efficiency and to adapt it to the requirements of the economy; and

(d) rationalizing professional training schools in order to increase opportunities for employment and training.

40. With regard to employment, apart from the need to stimulate the growth potential of the economy, a programme to generate employment, through various projects financed from both domestic and foreign resources, had been implemented. As for women, the programme aimed at helping in the improvement of their efficiency as production agents. It laid emphasis on such aspects as literacy programmes, improvements in the of provision of credit, etc.

Rwanda

41. Human resources planning over the past years (1966-1986) had been done through the successive five-year socio-economic development plans. Planning had been based essentially on socio-economic indicators, such as population density and growth rates, high concentration of schools in urban centres and other indicators, for example, school enrolment, constraints on education, level of employment, job creation, qualifications of manpower, both in the private and public sectors, and the importance and role of women in national socio-economic activities.

42. As a result of the economic difficulties experienced since 1987, it had not been possible to prepare the fourth five-year development plan for the period 1987-1991. However, the Government of Rwanda had prepared and started the implementation of a structural adjustment programme (1990-1993) and a public investment programme (1992-1994) which emphasized the promotion of employment creation through both the private and public sectors, ensuring that there was a correlation between training/employment, the development small- and medium-sized enterprises and handicrafts and the promotion of social welfare activities through family planning, education and primary health care for all. However, the implementation of the structural adjustment programme had brought about imbalances at the social dimension, which had led to the formulation of a national programme of social actions. The public investment programme and the national programme of social actions required substantial additional financial resources, which meant that the international community needed to contribute in order to ensure the smooth implementation of human resource activities.

43. The strategies and action programmes for the development and utilization of human resources had aimed essentially at: (a) family planning to reduce the population growth rate based on freedom of choice for each household; (b) improvement of health care based on public health services together with other support programmes (sanitation, supply of potable water, improvement of housing, etc.); (c) improvement of pre-school, primary, secondary and higher educational facilities; (d) increasing productive employment opportunities: (e) improvement of national organizational and institutional structures; (f) promotion of rural employment; (g) promotion of women's activities; and (h) promotion of national culture through education, sport and leisure.

Ethiopia

44. The representative of Ethiopia pointed out that the unemployment and underemployment problem deserved serious attention. The root causes of unemployment in Ethiopia could be attributed to several factors, namely, the slow rate of economic growth, inadequate human resources planning, the poor educational system, the high population growth rate, internal disorder and man-made factors, such as civil war. Having realized the seriousness of the problem, the Transitional Government of Ethiopia formulated policies and strategies aimed at improving the situation. These included, among other things:

(a) strengthening the manpower planning and employment units of the concerned agencies to analyze the profile of employment, study the manpower requirements of the economy, evaluate the balance between supply and demand for manpower and tailor manpower development according to the country's needs;

(b) creation of new employment opportunities, through public works programmes and the development of economic infrastructure using appropriate technology, mainly labour intensive technology; and

(c) educational reforms, i.e., improving the quality of education at all levels - primary, secondary and university and vocational training.

45. He went on to state that the Transitional Government had given top priority to the creation of a peaceful environment with a view to attracting foreign investors so that job opportunities for the unemployed could be created. It was also hoped a stable environment could attract qualified Ethiopians living abroad to return to Ethiopia to contribute to the revamping of the national economy.

Sudan

46. In his presentation, the representative of Sudan stated that universities in the Sudan faced tremendous financial difficulties following repeated currency devaluations and galloping inflation in recent years. This had forced universities to look for alternative funding, since they could no longer rely exclusively on government grants. One of the drastic measures taken recently was the abolishment of free full board arrangements. Furthermore, students were expected to pay fees in accordance with their financial abilities. A

students' support fund had been set up through People's efforts to assist poor students in meeting the costs of education services of the fund were first offered in the 1991/1992 academic year.

47. Special attention had been given to the agricultural sector with, particularly, support to the producer. Finance given by the Agricultural Bank had increased from Ls 150 million in 1989 to Ls 2.7 billion in 1992. 92 new branches were established by the Bank to help in the execution of the new agricultural policies. The adoption of these policies had helped the country to reach self-sufficiency in sugar. An expected surplus of 40,000 tones would be exported by the end of the cropping season. (28% of the country's sugar requirement used to be imported as recently as two years ago) Sudan had not only attained self sufficiency in the production of wheat but had also managed to produce a surplus which was expected to be exported. (The country, used to import 90% of its requirements) Production of sorghum reached 5 million tons in 1992, resulting in a surplus of 2 million tons which would be exported. Production increases had also been achieved in other agricultural products. The huge increase in agricultural production parallelled with the expansion in cultivated land. The strategic national plan had given special attention to the expansion of cultivated land. 10 million feddans would be added to the cultivated areas annually.

48. To promote employment, Sudan encouraged the employment, particularly of the low-income groups and unemployed, in what was known as the "family productive schemes". These were small-scale poverty alleviation programmes in the fields of agriculture, industry and handicraft. The Social Security Fund contributed Ls 60 millions in the 1992 budget; the Zakat Fund Ls 30 millions; and the Takaful (Mutual Social Fund) Ls 200 million in support of these programmes. Under the new national strategy, credit facilities to small-scale enterprises were to be given for 150,000 individuals starting with the 1992/93 budget. Priority will be given to poor families. The poverty line level was also being revised.

Kenya

49. The representative of Kenya informed the Committee that an independent Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment had been established in 1988. Manpower development and employment offices existed in over 35 districts throughout the Republic of Kenya. The Ministry had carried out a manpower survey, which had cast light on manpower development, employment and the training situations in the country. The Presidential Committee on Employment and Development Strategies had concluded its

work. The Sessional Paper No. I of l992 on Manpower Development had been tabled in Parliament for approval before implementation.

50. He went on to add that to take care of educational deficiencies, the government had changed the educational system to 8:4:4, with emphasis on science, technical subjects and mathematics. The new system emphasized the concept of self-employment. Private institutes of advanced technology, technical colleges and both national and village polytechnics were also being promoted.

51. On employment expansion, emphasis was given to the promotion of agro-based industries, such as sugar and tea. Other areas focused on loans to industries, rural enterprises and commercial activities. Financing approaches included community fund raising, presidential funds for education and research (e.g. medical research, fund for disadvantaged students and production of the Nyayo Car).

52. He concluded his statement by mentioning that to retain qualified and experienced personnel and tap talent in the universities, the government had improved the conditions of service, permitted academics to import cars duty free and appointed staff to high positions (e.g. top civil service positions and chairmanship of parastatals and leadership of national institutions), with the idea of doing away with the perception of the university as an "ivory tower".

Algeria

53. The Algerian delegate stated that the financing of the education system, especially higher education, took up a huge amount of the state budget owing to the rapid increase in school enrollment. Algeria devoted 8.5 per cent of its gross domestic product to the financing of the educational sector.

54. He further stated that the financing of higher education was therefore central to the development of Algeria's training system. To ensure continued financing of higher education, the following measures were being explored:

(a) optimizing expenditure by using, in the most efficient manner, facilities and equipment; and extending the duration of the university year and the opening time of universities;

(b) encouraging universities to secure new resources by providing research and consultancy services which will be used to fund research and procure laboratory equipment;

55. In order to provide specific solutions to the unemployment problem faced by young graduates in the country, a professional rehabilitation mechanism was created in the country through: (i) state assistance for the acquisition of premises and equipment (bank guarantee, interest rate bonus, tax relief); and (ii) supplementary adaptability training. In three years, this mechanism had made it possible to establish 10,000 small-scale enterprises capable of employing 35,000 workers. This measure had contributed to supplementing policies aimed at boosting growth, which was the only solution to the unemployment problem.

Nigeria

56. The representative of Nigeria stated that both the federal and state governments had established institutions of higher learning, particularly universities and polytechnics, to enable more people to benefit from higher education. In addition to faculties of science, health, engineering, etc., specialized universities had also been established to cater for the manpower requirements of the country in critical areas. He noted that 60% of university enrollment was in science subjects. The government had also put emphasis on science-related subjects in secondary schools.

57. He went on to say that during the past ten years, the government came up with a number of measures in its efforts to arrest the unemployment and underemployment problems. These included the establishment of the National Directorate of Employment, which focused on graduate employment, self-employment and skills training, and the Directorate of Roads and Infrastructure the main function of which was to ensure that rural areas were well connected. That could reduce the rural-urban drift, while at the same time enhance rural-urban exchange.

58. He concluded his statement by mentioning that community banks had also been established to provide loans to the rural poor at low interest rates. The Nigerian government was satisfied with the progress made so far in its efforts to solve the unemployment and underemployment problems in the country.

Swaziland

59. The representative of Swaziland pointed out that given the smallness of the country, Swaziland faced problems of attracting investors due to the limited domestic market. As such, human resources utilization problems, such as the rising rates of unemployment, had manifested themselves. The situation had been made worse by the rapid growth rates of the population

and the labour force. Another major problem faced was that of the brain drain, as a large number of the country's professionals continued to migrate to South Africa and elsewhere in search of better opportunities and conditions of service. The government had tried to deal with the situation by improving the conditions of service, speeding up the process of indigenization etc.

60. The effects of the rapid growth rates of the population and the labour force on increased unemployment rates were further compounded by the severe drought. To alleviate unemployment, the government put in place a loan scheme to promote productive employment. In addition, the government had recognized the need to establish an effective data collection, analysis and retrieval system that could enhance effective human resources planning, development and utilization in the country. Attempts were also being made to make educational institutions cost-effective and to re-orient their training programmes towards national development, particularly training of graduates who could be self employed in the formal and informal sectors.

OAU

61. The OAU's representative presented to the meeting the Declaration on the Employment Crisis in Africa which was adopted by the African Heads of State and Government, which gave an overview of the alarming employment situation in Africa. The Declaration included, among other things, the following:

(a) It appealed to the developed countries and international organizations to provide African countries with financial resources that could enable them to attain the objective of the OAU Labour Commission, i.e. full employment;

(b) It also appealed to the United Nations specialized agencies , amongst which are ILO, ECA and UNDP, to help African countries establish programmes to promote employment. Finally, it stated the broad outlines of actions that needed to be taken to develop human resources.

62. At the end of the country presentations, the Chairman called on the international community and international organizations to support Africa's development efforts, and in particular, human development, without conditionality. He also stressed the need for adopting a balanced approach to population and economic growth. He observed that activities of national ministries dealing with the various aspects of economic and social development needed to be co-ordinated on an urgent basis. He proposed,

in this regard, the setting-up of national councils for socio-economic development and planning, to be chaired by the heads of state, under which specialized councils dealing with the aspects of planning, social development and human resources development could be established. The ministry or directorate of planning could serve as the secretariat of this council. He also called on international organizations to assist in the establishment of these national structures.

VI. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

63. A representative of the Secretariat informed the Committee that its next meeting would be held alongside the next meeting of the ECA's Conference of Ministers Responsible for Economic Development Planning (the Commission). Members would be informed in good time of the dates and venue of that meeting.

VII. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

64. There was no other business to discuss.

VIII. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

65. The Committee considered its draft report and adopted it with a few amendments.

IX. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

66. The Chairman thanked the delegates for their cooperation and high quality interventions which made the meeting a successful one. He praised the Committee's role in giving in depth attention to human resources development and utilization issues, for the human being was the major factor and beneficiary of development.

67. ECA's representative then took the floor to thank the Chairman and members of the Committee for their pertinent contributions during the meeting, which came across clearly in the deliberations and recommendations of the report. He also thanked the delegates for their cooperation for having made the effort to prepare country reports on the state of human resources development, planning and utilization in their respective countries, which reflected the seriousness with which they view these issues. He further stated that he was particularly gratified for the close cooperation between ECA and sister organizations, such as ILO/JASPA, UNESCO and OAU as related to this

very important area of human resources development, planning and utilization in Africa. He expressed confidence that such cooperation would continue in the future. He assured the Committee that progress reports would be prepared as decided upon by the Committee and that the results of the meeting would be disseminated to member states.

68. The Chairman then declared the meeting closed.